United Nations E/2005/61

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
13 May 2005

Original: English

Substantive session of 2005
New York, 29 June-27 July 2005
General segment
Items 6 and 8 of the provisional agenda*

Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits

Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B

Updated report of the Secretary-General on the role of the Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, in the light of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B

Summary

At its 2004 substantive session, the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2004/44 decided to merge the review of the progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B, and 57/270 B and requested a single report. Following the request of the Council, the present report focuses on progress made in the implementation of the three resolutions.

The review of the methods of the work of the General Assembly and its Second and Third Committees are ongoing. Further work will be needed to complete the consultations successfully. With regard to the Council and its subsidiary machinery, progress has been made in several areas, including strengthening thematic unity across the different segments of the Council's substantive session; review of the working methods of the functional commissions; strengthening of the role of the United Nations regional commissions in conference follow-up. At the same time additional efforts need to be made to enhance cooperation among functional commissions and to strengthen cooperation between regional commissions and the funds and programmes.

* E/2005/100.

05-34415 (E) 070605

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Background	1–4	3
II.	Introduction	5–7	3
III.	Further strengthening the role of the General Assembly and its Second and Third Committees in the coordinated and integrated follow-up to the comprehensive development agenda	8–17	4
	A. The General Assembly	9–10	4
	B. The Second Committee	11–14	5
	C. The Third Committee	15–17	5
IV.	Further strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary machinery in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B	18–37	6
	A. Strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council	18–20	6
	B. Strengthening the work of the United Nations functional commissions in support of implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B, as well as resolutions 56/201 and 59/250	21–30	7
	C. Cooperation between the Council and the United Nations regional commissions	31–37	9
V.	Strengthening the Council's cooperation with the funds and programmes, with specialized agencies and inter-agency bodies, and the international financial and trade institutions	38–42	11
VI.	Complying with the specific mandates of the Council	43–52	12
	A. International Conference on Financing for Development	43–45	12
	B. The Almaty Programme of Action: addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries within a new global framework for transit, transport cooperation	46–47	13
	C. Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries	48–52	13
VII.	Enhancing the Council's cooperation with and the role of civil society and the private sector for development	53–55	14

I. Background

1. In paragraph 39 of its resolution 57/270 B, the General Assembly decided to include an item entitled "Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields" in the annual agenda of the General Assembly and invited the Secretary-General to submit a report on the question.

2. At its 2004 substantive session, the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2004/44 decided to merge the review of the progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B and requested a single report on the implementation of the resolutions. The resolutions lend themselves to a joint consideration as they build upon and complement each other.

3. Resolution 50/227, "Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields", focuses on ways of enhancing the role of the United Nations in the field of development. They include an increase in resources for operational activities and greater coherence in the work of the Second and Third Committee, and a strengthened role of the Economic and Social Council in system-wide coordination and enhanced linkages with trade and financial institutions. Resolution 52/12 B, "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform", includes several provisions relating to reforms in the economic and social fields, as well as development and humanitarian affairs.

4. Resolution 57/270 B, "Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields", aims to enhance coherence in the different conference follow-up processes, while maintaining their distinct identity. It also provides guidance to better coordinate global, regional and national development activities and to ensure that those activities are mutually supportive as well as contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. It calls upon the Economic and Social Council to continue to strengthen its role as the central mechanism for system-wide coordination. It also recognizes the need to further strengthen cooperation with the international financial and trading institutions and the important role of civil society and the private sector in advancing the implementation of conference outcomes.

II. Introduction

5. The United Nations summits and conferences of the last 15 years generated a global consensus on policies and actions to advance the objectives of eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development and provide a basic framework for pursuing those objectives. The Millennium Summit built on the outcomes of those summits and conferences and reinforced some of their key messages. The outcomes, together with the development-related aspects of the Millennium Declaration constitute the United Nations development agenda (see E/2005/56).

6. A much sharper focus on implementation of the internationally agreed goals and targets of the United Nations development agenda remains imperative. Though the Council initiated work on developing an integrated approach to the

implementation of the conference outcomes by focusing on their common themes since 1995, further efforts are required to steer the United Nations development system towards both more sustained and better integrated follow-up action.

7. The substantive aspects of an integrated follow-up to conferences have been discussed in the report of the Secretary-General for the High-level Segment of the Economic and Social Council (A/60/56). The present report focuses on progress made in the implementation of the three resolutions.

III. Further strengthening the role of the General Assembly and its Second and Third Committees in the coordinated and integrated follow-up to the comprehensive development agenda

8. As called for in resolutions 50/227, 57/270 B, 58/126 and 58/316, the review of the work of the General Assembly and its Second and Third Committees, especially as they relate to the implementation of and the follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences is ongoing. It is aimed at enhancing the policy leadership role of the General Assembly on development issues. That can be achieved by improving working methods that allow maximum focus, visibility and political energy towards the achievement of the United Nations development agenda.

A. The General Assembly

9. Since the General Assembly adopted resolutions 58/126 of 19 December 2003 and 58/316 of 1 July 2004, informal consultations have continued during its fifty-ninth session on its revitalization. Member States have pointed to the need to strengthen the role of the General Committee of the Assembly, continue to streamline and reduce the number of items on the agenda, adopt shorter and more focused resolutions, and streamline documentation without in any way compromising analytical depth and coverage. Those broad goals have formed the basis for consultations among Member States. While a consensus on improving the methods of work of the General Assembly and several of its main committees is yet to emerge, consultations are ongoing in the context of the next phase of reforms of the Organization. Those consultations are now linked to the issues of institutional reform being considered in preparation for the September Summit.

10. In the context of the need for better cooperation and improved division of labour between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council held two meetings in 2004 aimed at increased cooperation, coordination and complementarity of the work programmes of the three organs, as called for in resolution 58/126. That process will continue in the context of the next round of reforms and will also need to take into account the proposal to establish a peacebuilding commission as proposed in the Secretary-General's report for the September Summit (A/59/2005).

B. The Second Committee

11. The Chairman of the Second Committee at the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly submitted a set of proposals, which the Committee tried to implement during its fifty-ninth session. They include early meetings between the outgoing and incoming Bureau; introduction of question-and-answer sessions; better use of the Second Committee's website; early distribution of and consultation on the organization of work; avoidance of overlapping with plenary meetings; elaboration and distribution of the Chairman's summary of the general debate; extensive but rational use of panels, keynote speakers and round tables; compliance with the deadlines for the submission of draft resolutions; early start of negotiations and early adoption of resolutions; and clustering and better sequencing for the consideration of the agenda of the Committee.

12. During the fifty-ninth session, consultations continued on several other aspects of the improvement of the working methods. Following a series of consultations, the Second Committee agreed on a conference room paper (A/C.2/59/CRP.2/Rev.1) which emphasized the need for reaching timely consensus on items on the agenda, preserving the substantive nature of the resolutions; organizing discussions and events designed to contribute to a broader understanding and consideration of the issues; and maintaining the practice of allocating sufficient time after the formal consideration of each cluster allowing for negotiations. That would help the Committee in adopting resolutions in a timely fashion. It also requested the Committee on Conferences to consider advancing the timing of the Trade and Development Board meeting so that its report could be made available by the middle of September in order to enable the timely consideration of sub-items under the "Macroeconomic policy questions" cluster. The conference room paper also proposed that side events should be held in close proximity to the substantive discussion of the relevant agenda items and noted that greater attention should be given to the increasing role of side events organized by Member States that are related to the agenda of the Committee.

13. It was agreed that discussions on outstanding issues, related especially to the streamlining of the agenda, as well as strengthening cooperation with the Third Committee would continue.

14. **The Second Committee needs to take decisions this year on the outstanding issues, particularly streamlining and reclustering items on the agenda, and the division of labour and strengthened coordination with the Third Committee and the Economic and Social Council.**

C. The Third Committee

15. During the fifty-ninth session, the Third Committee approved a Chairman's text on the revitalization of its work, deciding to rationalize its agenda by merging some items, triennializing others and transferring some to the General Assembly in plenary meeting. Several far-reaching measures were agreed upon to improve the working methods of the Committee. They include measures to promote more interactive discussions as part of the formal proceedings; introduction at its sixtieth session, on a pilot basis, of interactive debates in an informal setting; submitting resolutions that are concise, focused and designed to have an impact on policy

development; and tabling resolutions biennially or at longer intervals and avoiding duplication especially where they have already been adopted by the Economic and Social Council or its subsidiary bodies.

16. Significantly, the Third Committee agreed to make renewed efforts to reduce the number of requests for reports from the Secretary-General, including through consolidation of reports. It was stressed that there should be no "automaticity" about requesting the Secretary-General's reports.

17. To strengthen coordination with the other Main Committees, joint panel discussions and meetings on issues of common interest were highlighted. Those changes are far-reaching and when implemented will serve to improve coherence and bring added value to the work of the Third Committee, as well as contribute to the work of other Main Committees, particularly the Second Committee.

IV. Further strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary machinery in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B

A. Strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council

1. Promoting a coherent, integrated and coordinated approach

18. The Economic and Social Council has a critical role to play in promoting a coherent, integrated and coordinated approach for the achievement of the United Nations development agenda. While efforts have been undertaken towards strengthening the role of the Council in conference follow-up, there is a need to infuse them with greater dynamism and result orientation. The Secretary-General's report at the high-level segment highlights the need for the United Nations system to integrate and align fully policies and programmes with the United Nations development agenda, particularly the Millennium Development Goals. At the intergovernmental level, there is an immediate need for a more coherent, coordinated and focused approach to monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the development agenda. To that end, **the Council needs to finalize, within the framework of actions that will be taken in the light of the proposals made in the Secretary-General's report at the high-level segment of the Council, the requirements contained in paragraph 42 of resolution 57/270 B, in which the General Assembly requested it to establish, no later than 2004, a four-year multi-year work programme for the coordination segment of its substantive session. Efforts should be made to agree on a full four-year multi-year programme of work that is effectively linked to the United Nations development agenda.**

2. Ensuring thematic unity and interlinkages between the different segments

19. A clear message emanating from resolution 57/270 B is the need to focus the Council's annual session around one broad theme. As a first step towards ensuring greater coherence, the Council decided that the high-level and coordination segments would focus on the same cross-sectoral conference themes (or related themes), but would also address them from both a policy development and a

coordination perspective. In recent years the themes of the high-level segments have provided the broad basis for the themes of the coordination and operational activities segments. While thematic unity is to be pursued, there is a need to address the issue of thematic unity and interlinkages among the segments within the framework of the actions that will be taken on proposals made in the Secretary-General's report to the high-level segment of the Council, in particular the proposal for a peer review and the holding of a development cooperation forum.

3. Streamlining the reporting system

20. Improving the effectiveness of the reporting system is another important element in strengthening the Council's policy setting and coordination functions. Reports submitted by the subsidiary, regional and related bodies of the Council provide it with a wealth of information and policy inputs relevant to not only the coordinated and integrated follow-up of the development agenda, but also for policy guidance, national development strategy formulation, evaluation and international cooperation. The Council has addressed itself to the question of better management and use of that information. The Bureau of the Council issued guidelines for documentation for the Council and its subsidiary bodies, drawn primarily from existing legislation in the General Assembly and the Council. The guidelines incorporate further steps to help to bring to manageable proportions and give greater focus to the documents submitted to the Council by its subsidiary bodies. **The subsidiary bodies should be encouraged to adhere to the guidelines for documentation.**

B. Strengthening the work of the United Nations functional commissions in support of implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B, as well as resolutions 56/201 and 59/250

21. The United Nations functional commissions have played a key role in the development and implementation of the United Nations development agenda, particularly acting as the preparatory committees for the international conferences and further in their follow-up. While individual functional commissions are, through their multi-year work programmes and priority themes, engaged in follow-up of the conference outcomes, stronger inter-commission coherence would lead to a more coordinated follow-up of the different goals and targets contained in the United Nations development agenda.

22. With that objective in view and to improve their own functioning, the General Assembly requested functional commissions and other relevant bodies of the Economic and Social Council in resolution 57/270 B[1] to review their working methods, strengthen cooperation among themselves, find ways to benefit from the lessons learned from each other, and report to the Council no later than 2005. That work is ongoing and several functional commissions have undertaken the exercise, the outcome of which is expected to lead to a more integrated implementation of the conference outcomes.

1. Review of working methods of the functional commissions

23. Following the request in resolution 57/270 B, to date most functional commissions have adopted multi-year programmes of work. To ensure continuity, most functional commissions now elect their incoming bureau immediately following the closure of their regular sessions. To strengthen the regional dimension, several commissions held panel events with the United Nations regional commissions as part of their session. The new methods of work have also encouraged an enhanced engagement of civil society and the private sector. A review of the work of the United Nations functional commissions on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration is provided in a separate 2005 consolidated report on the work of the Economic and Social Council functional commissions. Some functional commissions, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, the Statistical Commission, the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission for Social Development will continue to review their working methods at their next regular session. **The Council may wish to invite those functional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies that have not done so, to complete the examination of their methods of work, as a matter of urgency, in order to better pursue the implementation of the United Nations development agenda.**

2. Strengthening cooperation between functional commissions

24. Functional commissions are mostly working independently from one another on the follow-up to specific conferences and summits. That has caused a degree of compartmentalization and overlap as each functional commission tends to look at all thematic areas from within its own perspective. While that may be useful in highlighting several dimensions of an issue, it also leads to a disparate treatment of issues and sometimes does not blend coherently. That needs to be addressed at two levels.

25. At the Secretariat level, exchange of reports and other documents, joint activities and contacts between the various secretariats are the most common tools employed to ensure coherence of the work of the functional commissions. The substantive secretariats of five functional commissions that are located in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs are working together to coordinate their work programmes.

26. At the intergovernmental level, there is a need for greater interaction among the subsidiary bodies. To facilitate cooperation and exchange among the functional commissions and to strengthen coordination between the functional commissions and the Council, a meeting was held among the Chairs of the functional commissions and between the functional commissions and the Bureau of the Council in 2004. Information on the progress in the review of their working methods was shared with a focus on how to further enhance cooperation among functional commissions. Such meetings are also planned for the 2005 Economic and Social Council substantive session.[2]

27. **The Council should take it upon itself to provide a stronger coordinating function, inter alia, by harmonizing the functional commissions' multi-year programmes of work and their periodic cycles, standardizing reports in a more user-friendly manner, and by promoting integration of the outcomes of the deliberations of the functional commissions.**

3. Fostering cooperation between the functional commissions and the funds and programmes

28. In its resolution 57/270 B,[3] the General Assembly encouraged functional commissions to find ways to learn from the experience gained and lessons learned by the United Nations funds and programmes in the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits. To that end, functional commissions have made efforts, including through discussion panels, with representatives of the funds and programmes which have served to enrich each other's work. **The exchange of experiences and lessons learned between the functional commissions and the funds and programmes should be further enhanced, including through briefings by the United Nations Development Group Office (UNDGO).**

4. Strengthening cooperation between the Council and its functional commissions

29. For several years, annual meetings between the Bureau of the Council and the bureaux of the functional commissions have taken place. In the 2005 annual meeting discussions centred on the work of the commissions, measures to enhance collaboration among the functional commissions, and a review of their methods of work. The contribution of functional commissions to the work of the Council's substantive session on the themes of the high-level and coordination segments, as well as the possible contributions through the Council to the September Summit, was also discussed in the meeting.

30. Holding joint bureau meetings of the functional commissions and the Council during the regular sessions of the commissions allows for better coordination, timely information, inputs and guidance. It also has the added advantage that senior officials of bureau members participating in the Commission deliberations have an opportunity of interacting with the Bureau of the Council.

C. Cooperation between the Council and the United Nations regional commissions

31. Given the significant regional divergences in progress towards the achievement of the United Nations development agenda, mainstreaming the regional dimension into the overall work of the United Nations assumes added importance. This, however, is predicated upon a stronger two-way relationship with regional organizations. On the one hand, better integration of regional analysis into the global policy deliberations is required. On the other hand, comparative advantages of the regional commissions need to be better utilized in order to enhance coherence of the organizations' activities at the regional level, particularly, those undertaken in support of the United Nations development agenda. In that context, regional commissions have been given specific mandates from the Council for the follow-up of the major global conferences.[4] In response, they have undertaken efforts to link regional implementation measures with global deliberations and to contribute to policy implementation at the regional and country levels. **The Council will need to further strengthen its linkages with the regional commissions, particularly in the context of the peer reviews, which have been proposed by the Secretary-General in his report for the September Summit. The Council may wish to**

explore new modalities of enhancing its cooperation with the regional commissions, particularly in the preparation of reports on implementation.

1. Linking global deliberations with regional implementation initiatives

32. Cooperation between the Council and the regional commissions is a key instrument to ensure that global policy guidance provided by the Council is translated into concrete regional and subregional strategies for the implementation of the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals. It is equally important that global entities, when undertaking development initiatives, fully involve the relevant regional commissions. In the recent past, regional commissions have contributed to, and were involved in the work of the functional commissions, in particular, in the five- and ten-year review process of major international conferences. For example, in the plus-ten follow-up of the Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action and the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, several preparatory meetings were held with the regional commissions and their participation in the meetings of the respective functional commissions was facilitated.

33. Several regional commissions have strengthened their role as regional bodies for conference follow-up and implementation. In 2003, in preparation of the 2004 session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, five regional implementation meetings were organized to review and assess obstacles, constraints, challenges and opportunities in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, with a particular focus on the thematic cluster of water, sanitation and human settlement. In 2005, regional implementation meetings will be organized in preparation for the 2006 Commission on Sustainable Development review session.

34. An important mechanism for the coherent implementation of and follow-up to the major United Nations conferences are the coordination meetings between the regional commissions and the funds and programmes, as well as the United Nations departments and offices and agencies of the United Nations system engaged in regional and subregional activities. Such coordination meetings called for by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1998/46, were launched in 1999 under the chairmanship of the Deputy Secretary-General.

2. Fostering horizontal interregional cooperation

35. Horizontal interregional cooperation — cooperation between the regional commissions — should be strengthened through knowledge sharing and networking. Recent meetings of chiefs of transport and programme planning, as well as the focal points for information and communication technologies and energy are initiatives which enhance cooperation among the regional commissions. Such meetings should be extended to other substantive areas of work. **Regional commissions should continue their efforts to strengthen cooperation among themselves through knowledge sharing and networking.**

3. Strengthening linkages between regional commissions and regional bodies/arrangements

36. Major economic and social processes have been taking place at the regional level through regional bodies and arrangements. Examples of such processes are regional economic integration, free trade arrangements, and regional cross-border investments, infrastructural projects like highways, railroads and information technologies. Those initiatives of the regional bodies and arrangements have a great impact on the common welfare of large populations by reducing poverty and unemployment, and are important in the achievement of the development goals. **The United Nations regional commissions should play a greater supportive role in infrastructure, trade, and technology initiatives of regional bodies.**

4. Enhancing cooperation between regional commissions, funds and programmes and specialized agencies

37. Closer links need to be established between the regional structures of the funds and programmes and the respective regional commissions, so as to fully utilize the United Nations substantive and operational capacity available in each region. The strategic compact between the regional commissions and UNDP (July 2000) was an important initiative which could be built upon further. The participation of regional commissions in the UNDG meetings has served to strengthen policy formulation and coordination. **United Nations regional commissions and the United Nations funds and programmes should develop closer links between themselves in order to enhance coherence in their work at the regional level.**

V. Strengthening the Council's cooperation with the funds and programmes, with specialized agencies and inter-agency bodies, and the international financial and trade institutions

38. A stronger link between the policy guidance role of the Economic and Social Council, its functional commissions and the operational activities arm is essential to ensure that global policy guidance on the integrated and coordinated follow-up to global conferences translates into effective support to regional, subregional and national efforts for their implementation. Similarly, regional and country-level experiences need to permeate further into global thinking and analysis.

39. That requires stronger linkages and greater coherence between global policy guidance and the policies and programmes endorsed by the Executive Boards of the United Nations funds and programmes, the governing bodies of the specialized agencies, the regional as well as the functional commissions, and the bureaux of the international finance and trade institutions.

40. As reviewed in previous sections of the report, several efforts are under way to promote cooperation of funds and programmes with functional commissions and to revitalize cooperation with the regional commissions. Initiatives have also been undertaken to facilitate greater cooperation among the governing bodies of the funds and programmes, such as the joint meetings of the Executive Boards of UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, and WFP, while the annual high-level meeting between the Economic and Social Council, the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and UNCTAD have facilitated dialogue among those organizations.

41. While these important initiatives are works-in-progress, they need to coalesce into an integrated and cohesive approach through a United Nations system-wide framework. That has important implications for the Council's ability to promote a more integrated and coordinated follow-up to global conferences within the system in a way that enables it to translate such an approach into system-wide strategies and programmes.

42. Closer links need to be built between the Council and the governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations. Meetings between the bureaux of the functional commissions and the Bureau of the Council and the participation of the chairpersons of the functional commissions in the Council's sessions have helped to improve the dialogue between the Council and the functional commissions. **Commissions and their secretariats should clearly identify the operational implications of their work and bring them to the attention of the governing bodies of the funds and programmes for their consideration and guidance on operational activities to strengthen the link between policy guidance and operational activities.**

VI. Complying with the specific mandates of the Council

A. International Conference on Financing for Development

43. The Monterrey Consensus established a follow-up process to the Conference in both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

44. In the General Assembly, resolution 59/225 on "Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development" was adopted on 22 December 2004. The General Assembly also decided in resolution 59/145 of 17 December 2004 to hold a High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development on 27 and 28 June 2005, in New York, immediately prior to the Economic and Social Council 2005 High-level Segment, in order for its recommendations to be considered in the preparatory process of General Assembly High-level Plenary Meeting and within its framework, to hold a separate meeting on financing for development.

45. The 2005 special high-level meeting of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, the WTO and (since 2004) UNCTAD, focused on the theme of "Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration" in the context of the overall focus of the meeting on "Coherence, coordination and cooperation in the context of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus". Six round tables addressing three issues: (a) policies and strategies; (b) trade, investment, and private flows; and (c) ODA, innovative sources of financing and debt were held. The unprecedented participation by the Executive Directors of the Boards of the Bretton Woods institutions and a significant number of Finance and other Ministers, Central Bank Governors, as well as the President of the Trade and Development Board was testimony to the fact that that meeting is considered an important platform for enhancing coherence within the system, not only in the follow-up to Monterrey, but also in the pursuit of the broader development agenda. Participants concurred with regard to the urgency to build momentum towards the September Summit and accelerate progress in implementation of the development goals. Advancing the implementation of the

Monterrey Consensus was seen as a critical element to that end. In addition, participants highlighted the growing interest in pursuing several of the initiatives regarding innovative sources of finance.

B. The Almaty Programme of Action: addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries within a new global framework for transit, transport cooperation

46. An "Inter-agency meeting on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action", held in New York on 4 February 2004, endorsed a road map for its implementation. In its resolution 59/245 of 22 December 2004, on specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries, the General Assembly invited the 2005 High-level General Assembly Plenary Meeting to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries.

47. Representatives of the international, regional and subregional organizations met in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from 29 to 31 March 2005, for the high-level meeting on the "Role of International, Regional and Subregional Organizations for the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action". In a communiqué representatives stressed the importance of taking concrete steps in accordance with the road map for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and requested the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to continue its consultations on the best possible ways to facilitate coordination efforts and to continue to organize meetings on an annual basis.

C. Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

48. In 2004, the Council's substantive session addressed themes related to least developed countries issues as part of the Council's efforts to pursue a coherent and comprehensive approach to the review of the implementation of the Programme of Action. Preparatory activities including a series of multi-stakeholder round tables on resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication were held in February and March 2004 to examine the theme of the high-level segment in the context of the Brussels Programme of Action as a means of achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the least developed countries.

49. In the high-level segment, the Council adopted a Ministerial Declaration on the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 recognizing the weak implementation of the Programme of Action and underlining the need to address that issue. To that end, the Declaration urged each least developed country, with the support of its development partners, to continue the implementation of the actions contained in the Programme of Action by translating them into specific measures, within its national development framework and poverty eradication strategy.

50. The coordination segment reviewed the efforts of the United Nations system to promote an integrated approach to rural development with a special focus on the

least developed countries. In its resolution 2004/48, the Council called for enhanced coordination and cooperation among the agencies of the United Nations system in support of national development strategies as well as in enhancing their cooperation with the World Bank and the regional development banks. The United Nations system was called upon to further assist developing countries in their efforts to enhance access by the poor to productive assets, to support capacity-building measures as well as regional and subregional initiatives and to promote South-South cooperation.

51. The Second Committee reviewed the implementation and invited the 2005 September Summit to address the special needs of the least developed countries, while reviewing the progress made in the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. It also decided to hold a comprehensive review of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries in 2006, during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, in accordance with paragraph 114 of the Programme of Action. The Committee also reiterated its concern over the weak implementation of the Programme of Action.

52. At the special high-level meeting held in April 2005 with the Bretton Woods institutions, the WTO, and UNCTAD, the Council also addressed issues related to least developed countries/low-income countries and promoted linkage between the Programme of Action and the International Conference on Financing for Development.

VII. Enhancing the Council's cooperation with and the role of civil society and the private sector for development

53. The Summits and Conferences recognized the role of civil society and the private sector in achieving the development goals and targets set out in them. The Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2) also recognized their role and it commits Governments "to develop strong partnerships with the private sector and with civil society organizations in pursuit of development and poverty eradication". In recent years, the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions have significantly intensified the involvement of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, foundations, parliamentarians and local authorities, and the private sector. Perhaps the most innovative and successful of the Council's multi-stakeholder initiatives is the Information and Communication Technology Task Force. Non-governmental organizations and members of the business community also participate actively in the annual special high-level meetings with the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and UNCTAD. Prior to these meetings, public hearings are organized to enable Member States and other stakeholders to interact with civil society and the private sector on the key issues. These initiatives have enriched the proceedings of the Council and its subsidiary bodies.

54. At the national and regional levels, civil society organizations are increasingly participating in the development process, including through programmes and initiatives for the eradication of poverty. Worldwide, non-governmental organizations have also been at the forefront of delivery of humanitarian assistance.

55. A dynamic private sector is essential for the successful implementation and follow-up of the goals and targets set out in the conferences and summits. Public-private partnerships established to deal with the challenges of development have systematically grown. Private sector companies are today active partners in many parts of the developing world in every aspect of development. The United Nations is actively involved in promoting the role of the private sector. Under the aegis of the United Nations Global Compact the Global Compact Leaders Summit was convened at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 24 June 2004 in which 500 chief executive officers, government officials and heads of labour and civil society on the topic of global corporate citizenship gathered for the first meeting of its kind. The meeting adopted anti-corruption as an additional principle of the 10 internationally agreed principles of the compact.

Notes

[1] In its resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, the General Assembly requested each functional commission to examine its methods of work in order to better pursue the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, recognizing that there is no need for a uniform approach since each functional commission has its own specificity, while also noting that modern methods of work can better guarantee the review of progress made in implementation at all levels, bearing in mind the progress recently achieved in this regard by certain commissions, especially the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Assembly requested the functional commissions and other relevant bodies of the Economic and Social Council to report to the Council no later than 2005 on the outcome of the examination.

[2] A meeting between the chairs of the functional commissions is scheduled to be held on 1 July 2005 and a meeting of the chairs of the functional commissions with the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council is planned for 7 July 2005.

[3] In paragraph 48 of resolution 57/270 B, the General Assembly invited functional commissions to consider, in their deliberations, the experience gained and lessons learned by the United Nations funds and programmes in the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits.

[4] In its resolution 1998/46, the Council invited regional commissions to further strengthen their active participation in implementation at the regional level of the results of the major United Nations conferences and summits. In resolution 57/270 B the General Assembly invited regional commissions, in collaboration with other regional and subregional organizations and processes, to contribute, within their existing mandates, to the review of progress in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits and to provide input to the discussions of the Council on the cross-sectoral thematic issues to be discussed at the Council's substantive session.